10. Rs. 1200 under 15-1-Huzur Secretariat—Purchase and Repair of Furniture

Rama Varmha Tampuran M.B.E. *(Secretary to Government):* Sir, I rise to move for an additional allotment of Rs. 1,200 under "15-1-Huzur Secretariat—Purchase and Repair of Furniture". I request that the House may be pleased to grant the allotment.

Cut motion

Mr. Joseph Pettah *(Adur):* Sir, I move to reduce the amount of Rs. 1,200 for purchase and repair of furniture under 15-1-Huzur Secretariat by Re. 1 in order to show the necessity for providing in the Secretariat a properly furnished waiting room for people who go there on business. I hope that this cut motion will be quite a welcome change to the members on the other side also because they are the best witnesses to the fact that at present there is no properly furnished waiting room for the people who go to the Secretariat on business. There is the Joint Secretary's Office below and the other Joint Secretary and the Chief Secretary are in the up-stairs. Below there is no place to rest except the compound. If you go up there is the verandah and if some of the peons happen to recognise you they might bring a chair and you can sit in the verandah.

Mr. A. B. Salem *(Mattancheri):* Even if you are not recognised they will provide you with a chair.

Mr. Joseph Pettah *(Adur):* In any case whether they recognise us or not, in keeping with the dignity of our Secretariat and also for the convenience of the people who go there on business we must have a waiting room—not merely for their convenience but also for the convenience of the officers there. Oftentimes the visitors just push into their rooms while others are there. It happened to me on one occasion. I wanted to meet the Joint Secretary and I was waiting there in the compound. One peon came and told me "You can go in". But when I stepped into his room there were some two or three other people. I was in a very awkward position. If there is a waiting room these visitors can wait there and take their turn conveniently. I think that every decent Government which keep up civilised appearances would provide a decently furnished waiting room especially in the metropolis, in the nerve centre, in the very headquarters. If there is no decently furnished waiting room there, where else can we expect a properly furnished waiting room? No much argument is necessary. I am sure the Government members will themselves support this. May be that all the rooms at present are occupied. There may be some difficulties. Some money will have to be spent. But even then that money will not be mis-spent. It will contribute so much to the convenience of the people and also of the officers concerned. It is in this spirit that I beg to move this cut, and I place this matter before the Government.

Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan *(Vdakkancheri):* Sir, I support this motion. Any one who goes to the Secretariat will appreciate the difficulties enunciated by the Hon'ble Mover of the cut. So the provision sought for is an absolute necessity. More than that one who goes to the Secretariat in recent months or even years will be struck with the unhappy condition in which the secretariat is kept. Going from the stair-case you have to go up the stairs treading on very nasty mattings—worse than the mattings of this House. When you look up you find the absence of a dash of paint applied even during the last 6 or ten years. That certainly is not the condition in which the Secretariat of the State should be kept. I do not wish to dilate much upon this. It is very very unhappy. I wish and hope that something should be done on the lines indicated by the mover of the cut motion.

Mr. A. V. Moothedan *(Chalakkudi):* Sir, I wish to add a few words. In the Secretariat there is very much of congestion and the present rooms are not sufficient to accommodate the staff. If you go there you find all these clerks are huddled together in some corner or other. Now the only way to get out of all these difficulties is to construct some new building. The activities of the Secretariat is every day increasing and there will be new departments created to cope with the increased work. Therefore it is only proper that they should get the whole of the court buildings and a new building for the civil court may be constructed anywhere else. Now at present there is no convenience for the visitors who go there on business. They have to simply loiter in the verandahs. At least some chairs and a table may be placed in the verandah for the convenience of the visitors. Some newspapers may also be placed on the table just to keep these visitors engaged till they get time to see the Secretary or the Diwan as the case may be. Now the Government is getting two copies of each of the newspapers and I do not think that there will be any difficulty in that direction. This common courtsey may be shown to the visitors and to the officers also more rooms are required.

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Mr. A. B. Salem *(Mattancheri):* Sir, I think the ante-room before you get into the Diwan's room may be converted into a visitors' room. There are a number of chairs kept in the verandah. (A voice "How many"?) More than six.

The Hon'ble President took the Chair at 3-15 p.m.

The difficulties are more than exaggerated. A number of chairs are there. Certainly it will add dignity to the Secretariat to have a proper ante-room. I am at one with you there and also I think it is only right that whatever be the conditions, war conditions or other conditions, the Secretariat must be kept speck and span and most attractively and most beautifully and at least some varnish will be good and very usefully spent. I always thought that the only officer who has an eye for all these things is Mr. Mathew. His room is always very neat and tidy. I do not know how he manages it. As regards the other places, they are not as well kept, as it ought to be. That suggestion may be considered.

Rao Sahib K. Ayyappan *(Ezhuvas-Kanayannur):* Sir, I also take this opportunity to say something about this matter. The whole trouble is due to the notion of the dignity of the Secretariat. The time-honoured notion of the dignity of the Secretariat has been to see no dignity in the people. They do not care for the dignity of the people. They do not consider the needs of the people. They think that the people will stand or squat somewhere in the verandah or under the tree. Therefore what is required is a revolution in the notion of dignity of the Secretariat. Unless you work that revolution there will be no change in this unhappy state of affairs. I had once moved a motion in this House to give seating arrangements in all public offices. The public offices are being run with the money of the people. Their comforts and their convenience should be attended to more carefully than those of their servants who are the officers there. Therefore my only request to the Government is that it is high time that they change their notion of dignity.

Rama Varmha Tampuran, M.B.E. *(Secretry to Government):* Sir, it is conceded that we are very much short of space. This dearth of space has been felt for the last 8 or nine years. Ever since the portfolio of Joint Secretary to Government was created this trouble of dearth of space has been keenly felt. Somehow or other at times by borrowing a hall from the District Judge and by squeezing ourselves in the available rooms at other times, we used to manage. Now there is a proposal to build a hall to the east of the present main building either parallel to it or at right angles which will accommodate a good number of officers. The difficulty is on account of the extremely high cost of construction in these days. The usual tender rate now-a-days is 300 per cent above the normal rates. If we want a hall of that size under the normal schedule rates its estimated cost will be 18 to 20 thousand rupees and the present cost of construction will be 60 thousand rupees and that will be only for a single hall. It is this question of extra cost that has been keeping the Government back from building extra rooms to the Secretariat. If we have more rooms there will be no difficulty to allot one for the use of visitors. At present as pointed out by the Hon'ble Member for Mattancheri we are using the verandah and also the room adjacent to the Diwan's room. It is not anything very beautiful but visitors come only very rarely and they have to wait there only for a few minutes. Therefore no one is very much particularly inconvenienced by the dearth of sumptuous arrangements in the vicinity. Of course Mr. Pettah stated it might be embarassing to wait outside for a few minutes when there are other visitors. It will be certainly desirable to have a room set apart exclusively for visitors. We will certainly consider this question. This morning I suggested to Mr. Pettah that I will ask the Chief Engineer about the feasibility of constructing a terrace connecting the ante room with the verandah. In that case the cars can go below and the top floor of it can be utilised for visitors. I do not know whether it will be possible. The Chief Engineer will be asked to submit proposals.

Mr. Joseph Pettah *(Adur):* Sir, I beg leave of the House to withdraw the motion.

Cut motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Demand put and carried

11. Rs. 100 under "13-Registration—(S) P.C.R."

Mr. B. V. K. Menon *(Joint Secretary to Government):* Sir, I rise to move for an additional allotment of Rs. 100 under "13 Registration—(s) P.C.R.". The amount provided in the budget has become insufficient and hence the necessity for this small grant. I request that the House may be pleased to grant the same.

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